

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 4632

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SP

SUBJ: EL FERROL WORKER TRIAL COMMENCES

SUMMARY: IMPORTANT TRIAL OF 23 PERSONS INVOLVED IN 1972
EL FERROL SHIPYARD STRIKE AND DISORDERS COMMENCED IN MADRID
JULY 1. DESPITE PARTICIPATION LAWYERS OF MOST OPPOSITION
GROUPS IN DEFENSE, AND PRESENCE OF SOME FOREIGN OBSERVERS
(INCLUDING, ALLEGEDLY, 3 AMERICAN LAWYERS), THIS CASE FALLS
FAR SHORT OF 1973 "CARABANCHEL TEN" TRIAL IN TERMS OF INTER-
NATIONAL PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AND PUBLIC INTEREST. END SUMMARY

1. LONG-AWAITED TRIAL OF 23 PERSONS INVOLVED IN MARCH
1972 STRIKE AT BAZAN SHIPYARDS IN EL FERROL BEGAN JULY 1
AT MADRID'S PUBLIC ORDER COURT. (DURING 1972 EVENTS, POLICE
IN EL FERROL HAD ATEMPTED TO STOP 4,000 STRIKERS SEEKING TO
MARCH INTO THE PORT AND FIRED INTO THE MARCHERS, KILLING TWO
WORKERS AND INJURING 37 PERSONS, INCLUDING SOME POLICE. CITY
WAS THEN SCENE OF SOMETHING AKIN TO ANARCHY FOR SEVERAL HOURS
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UNTIL SUFFICIENT POLICE UNITS WERE BROUGHT IN FROM OUTSIDE THE

CITY TO BRING THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL.)

2. GOVT IS TRYING THE 23 ON VARIOUS CHARGES INCLUDING ILLICIT ASSOCIATION, NON-PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, AND ILLEGAL PROPAGANDA. MOST ACCUSED ARE WORKERS, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE ALSO A LAWYER, TWO TEACHERS, AND THREE HOUSEWIVES AMONG THE ACCUSED. SEVERAL ARE MEMBERS OF WORKERS COMMISSIONS IN EL FERROL AND 9 ARE REPORTEDLY MEMBERS OF SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCE), WHILE REMAINDER BELONG TO NON-COMMUNIST LABOR GROUPS OR ARE APOLITICAL. TRIAL IS EXPECTED TO LAST 3-4 DAYS. GOVT PROSECUTOR IS ASKING FOR SENTENCES RANGING FROM SEVERAL MONTHS IN A FEW CASES, TO 3-5 YEAR SENTENCES FOR MOST, UP TO 13, 15, AND 17 YEAR SENTENCES FOR SOME OF ACCUSED.

3. AS IN MANY OTHER WORKER TRIALS, SUCH AS THE FAMOUS 1973 "CARABANCHEL TEN" TRIAL, DEFENDING LAWYERS REPRESENT BROAD OPPOSITION SPECTRUM, INCLUDING A MEMBER OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GIL ROBLES FAMILY, MONARCHIST LAWYER JAIME MIRALLES, PSOE/UGT "YOUNG TURK" LEADER GREGORIO PECES BARBA, AND PCE MEMBERS AND LAWYERS ANTONIO DE RATO, CRISTINA ALMEIDA, AND JAIME SARTORIUS (BROTHER OF NICOLAS SARTORIUS, PCE LAWYER AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER NOW SERVING A LENGTHY JAIL TERM AS ONE OF "CARABANCHEL TEN").

4. EFFORTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO FOCUS SOME INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION ON CASE AND TO ATTRACT SOME FOREIGN OBSERVERS TO TRIAL. LABATT HAS BEEN TOLD BY UGT LEADERS THAT TOMAS NIELSEN, DANISH ILO TRADE UNION LEADER WHO ARRIVED MADRID JUNE 30 HEADING SMALL DANISH TRADE UNION DELEGATION HERE AS GUESTS OF CLANDESTINE UGT, ATTENDED TRIAL ON FIRST DAY, BUT ONLY IN PERSONAL CAPACITY. REPORTEDLY AN OBSERVER FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IS ALSO PRESENT AS WELL AS SOME UNSPECIFIED FRENCH AND ITALIAN OBSERVERS. THREE UNSPECIFIED AMERICAN LAWYERS REPORTEDLY ALSO HERE TO ATTEND TRIAL, WHO WERE REPORTEDLY BEING ESCORTED AROUND BY PCE LAWYER JAIME SARTORIUS. (WHILE THESE AMERICAN LAWYERS HAVE NOT CONTACTED EMBASSY AND THEIR IDENTITY IS NOT KNOWN, THEY MAY FORM PART OF GROUP OF LIBERAL NEW YORK LAWYERS, HEADED BY LAWYER ERIC SCHMIDT, WHICH HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN ANTI-FRANCO CAUSES AND WHO BROUGHT FORMER U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL RAMSEY CLARK TO MADRID FOR 1973 "CARABANCHEL TEN" TRIAL).

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5. SOME SCATTERED LABOR INCIDENTS AND INTENSIFICATION OF A PREVIOUS STRIKE IN EL FERROL ON JULY 1 WERE PRESEUMABLY TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH COMMENCEMENT OF TRIAL IN MADRID.

6. COMMENT: EFFORTS TO FOCUS INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION AND TO MOUNT A SUBSTANTIAL PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN IN EPPMGGILLGR

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FALLEN FAR

SHORT OF RESULTS OBTAINED IN 1973 "CARABANCHEL TEN"

TRIAL. PRESUMED REASONS THIS TRIAL

COULD BRING MUCH LESS

EMPHASIS INCLUDE: (A) DESPITE DEATH OF TWO WORKERS, EL FERROL CASE ONLY INVOLVES TRIAL OF RELATIVELY UNKNOWN WORKERS FROM PROVINCIAL CITY, WHEREAS "CARABANCHEL TEN" TRIAL INVOLVED SEVERAL OF BEST KNOWN NATIONAL WORKERS COMMISSIONS LEADERS SUCH AS COMMUNIST MARCELINO CAMACHO; (B) PCE IS NOT ANYWHERE NEAR AYR INTERESTED IN PROMOTING CASE INTERNATIONALLY SINCE MAJORITY OF EL FERROL WORKERS ON TRIAL ARE NON-COMMUNISTS, WHEREAS NINE OF "CARABANCHEL TEN" WERE PCE MEMBERS; AND (C) DIFFERENT POLITICAL GROUPS REPRESENTED IN DEFENSE ARE FEUDING BITTERLY OVER RECENT EVENTS (PRINCIPALLY CREATION OF TWO RIVAL OPPOSITION COALITIONS, I.E., PCE-MANIPULATED JUNTA DEMOCRATICA AND RIVAL PLATAFORMA DE CONVERGENCIA), WHICH THUS HAS PREVENTED THEM FROM AGREEING UPON JOINT STRATEGY OR COORDINATED INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN.

7. FOLLOWING CUSTOMARY PRACTICE, VERDICT AND SENTENCES ARE EXPECTED 7-15 DAYS FOLLOWING TRIAL. MOST, IF NOT ALL, OF ACCUSED ARE EXPECTED BE FOUND GUILTY.
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